

1 November 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Support Services Staff

SUBJECT : Records Management Conference

With considerable pleasure, once again I submit the report on an extremely successful Records Management Officers Conference held 22-23 October 1968 at the [REDACTED]

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Attending was
A total of eighty-two Records Management Officers (10 more than our Conference last year) and Officers directly concerned with the Agency's Records Program ~~ended~~. A list of the participants including their components is attached as appendix I. *The attached Agenda lists six* ~~There were five~~ speakers on the program, ~~excluding myself~~, *National Archives and Records Service* one from outside the Agency, Mr. Artel

Ricks, our keynote speaker. The Conference got underway ~~promptly~~ at 10:00 A.M. *Tuesday morning.* after the registration procedure and opening administration, *a few minutes for*

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Mr. Artel Ricks, Director, Paperwork Standards and Automation Division, NARS, ~~was the keynote speaker~~ and gave a stimulating talk on Information Storage and Retrieval. A recording was made of his talk

which we plan to have transcribed by the clerical pool on a time available basis. Mr. Ricks complemented ^{the Agency's records} our program ~~and the Agency~~ by stating ~~that~~ we had pioneered intelofax in the aperture card system, which since has gone into the computer. In this regard, he said he felt this ^{he was} ~~was~~ like "hauling coals to Newcastle".

Mr. Ricks emphasized that ^{the} ~~our only~~ purpose ^{for} ~~is~~ filing documents is to retrieve them, ^{merely} not to store. This may seem an over simplification but it ~~is~~ should be the basis for selecting file storage equipment. ^{and} does the equipment help ~~us~~ get the information we want, ^{and} when we want it, ^{and} more efficiently? Shakespeare once said "I can call spirits from the vasty beach." Hotspur retored, "so can I and so can any man, but will they come?" Mr. Ricks used this quotation to point out the problem that we all encounter in trying to retrieve information.

"Our occupation, our profession" Mr. Ricks said, "is hard to identify sometimes." He cited a conversation that he had with his 7 year old son. His son had brought home an especially good report card so ~~he~~ ^{he} as all fathers would want to, ^{he} praised his son for the good report. He thought he would take this opportunity to ask his son what he wanted to be when he grew up? Perhaps a lawyer, doctor, fireman, a farmer - no, ^{the} ~~he~~ said, he wanted to be just like his dad. Well of course, this would cause most fathers to be very proud, ~~as was Mr. Ricks.~~ Not realizing he would have been better off to leave it at that, Mr. Ricks asked his son once again, "just what is it you want to be?" His son replied, "I want to be---I want to be a nothing just like you dad!"

Mr. Ricks discussed the use of ^acomputer~~s~~ as a means of retrieving information but hasten^d to say it was not necessarily the most economical. He mentioned some of the non-conventional filing equipment; visual~~s~~ files, rotary files and the various mechanized filing equipment. Good manual filing systems are, in Mr. Ricks' words, still the best answer in most offices. He acknowledges that conventional filing systems do have limitations; a) they require in advance, just how material going to be requested, b) give you the records in total, i.e., a series rather than specific data needed and c) too shallow an indexing capability.

Mr. Ricks touched on the Video tape system as a possible solution for the storage retrieval problem but did not consider it to be the answer today. It is ~~presently~~ considered to be extremely expensive, difficult to erase and update, and is not used in computer-type searches. Why consider the computer? It is the most versatile searching device we have except for the human brain, but is not necessarily the fastest nor the most instantaneous.

In the field of Records Management, as in other areas, we consider ourselves professionals and hopefully, experts. We might want to re-think our claim to being experts as an expert is said to be a person that knows no more than we do but is a little better organized in presenting his subject and, uses slides.

Photographs were taken of the conferees, one of the DCI & DDS, one of the DDP and the third one of the DDI & DDS&T. An air of amiability and informality prevailed, thus affording the participants the opportunity to meet and get to know each other. They shared their experiences and

techniques as well possibly opening up new channels for procedures and systems discussed by Mr. Ricks.

The remainder of the first day ^{provided} ~~entailed~~ enlightening talks ~~by~~ Mr.

25X1A9a ~~gave an~~ covering "Introduction to Automation" Mr. ~~25X1A9a~~ 25X1A9a

25X1A9a ~~whose talk~~ covered "Magnetic Tape to Microfilm Recording" and ~~made a~~ ^{provided a detailed handout on} ~~25X1A9a~~ 25X1A9a presentation "Microforms, Video Tape Files, and Laser Beam

Systems". ~~All three talks were very well presented and very pertinent~~ ^{"New Techniques of Information Storage and Retrieval."} to the theme of our Conference. It was significant ~~that~~ that we were

able to have three speakers, representing three different Directorates.

No less important of course, was the fact that ~~25X1A9a~~ Senior Records 25X1A9a Officer for the DCI, helped to balance out the over-all Agency representation.

The social activity achieved the informality that we had hoped for and did ^{occur at several} ~~succeed in numerous~~ officers meeting that had not met personally before. The movie, held in the gymnasium, attracted a goodly number who seemed to enjoy the light comedy film. (*Luella Ball in "Yours Mine and Ours"*)

The several exhibits, samples, literature and demonstrations of ^{equipment, systems, and supplies} ~~microfilm~~ held in the art room were well received. Short films, 10 to 15 minutes duration were run in support of talks on motorized equipment, automation, and videotape files. The evening also provided for a tour of the Records Center for those personnel who had not seen the Center activity.

~~The~~ ^{sessions began} Wednesday morning I ~~got the proceedings underway~~ ^{my} with ~~talk~~ ^{on} "Total Records Management with Microfilm and ADP Systems". I attempted ~~to~~ ^{to} bring these technologies into focus with Records Management, and specifically with office procedures and filing systems. This talk

somewhat set the stage for [redacted] presentation "New Technology". 25X1A9a
from ORD/PDS+T

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[redacted] had some excellent slides to help elucidate his topic which while quite technical for the audience, seemed to completely hold their interest.

The highlight of the two days was the forum sessions. The success of these groups last year dictated that we conduct the same type of program at this Conference. The forum groups of *10 to 12 conferees* ~~which~~ *(there were six groups)* met in individual rooms in the gymnasium building. The groups were led by a forum chairman, and a secretary, and were given the problem to consider ~~(attached appendix II)~~ *attached* "creating the concept of a new records system for your components". The groups met for about 45 minutes and then reconvened for another hour after lunch to consider ~~one proposed concept~~ *the best* ~~which each group would~~ *which each group would* present to the Conference assembly. A central panel group, consisting of *the Senior Agency and* ~~the Directorate Senior Records Officers~~ *each* ~~of each~~ and discussed ~~their proposals~~ *each* at this time. A written record of ~~each of~~ *proposals and* the forum groups ~~proposed~~ *proposals and* concepts were collected and are to be reviewed further by the central panel. The forum sessions were considered to be fruitful and met the designed objective in every respect. Feedback and comments received at the conclusion of the Conference, substantiate these views.

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Attachments:
List of Conferees
Agenda
Forum Problem